



## CITY OF LODI COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

**AGENDA TITLE:** Presentation on the Opportunity to Seek Certification for the City's Efforts Toward Sustainability

**MEETING DATE:** October 23, 2007

**PREPARED BY:** Community Development Department

**Purpose:** To provide information and background on the need and opportunity to seek certification for the City's efforts toward sustainability. The purpose of a certification would be to establish a base line by which the City can measure its sustainable practices, set goals of attainment that work in that regard, and ultimately obtain third party verification of the City's sustainability.

**Background:** The issue of sustainability has become prominent in debates regarding the issue of climate change. Although there is debate regarding the rate of change caused by the release of "Greenhouse Gases" (GHGs) into the atmosphere the fact that change is occurring is well accepted. Trying to slow, stop or reverse the rate at which we release these GHGs, which include carbon dioxide, methane and chlorofluorocarbons has sparked a federal, state and local agencies into action. At the municipal level, the comprehensive way to address this issue is by promoting sustainable practices.

The most common definition of sustainability is activities that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainability relates to the balance between economic viability, social equity, and environmental justice. The concept of sustainability demanded attention at the State level in recent years with the passage of AB 32—Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. Among government agencies the concept is finding its way into General Plan policies, construction guidelines, mandated regulations, and EIRs. Recently, on a local level, the State Attorney General challenged the Draft EIR for the 2007 San Joaquin County Regional Transportation Plan for not addressing global warming.

Sustainability also involves financial sustainability, the ability to ensure that the organization can remain financially viable into the future and continue to provide municipal services.

All municipal organizations have some level of sustainable practices throughout their organization. However, very few take the initiative to go through a process of determining what they are doing, how they can improve, and get third party guidance to help verify that they are headed in the right direction. A unified cross departmental approach to sustainability is critical. Attached is a chart of sustainable activities typical to a city. These practices include recycling, using energy efficient equipment, driving alternative fuel vehicles, promoting photovoltaics, planning more walkable communities, and much more.

Similar to other certifications that the City has already achieved such as Tree City USA, a sustainability certification would be a way to demonstrate through measurable efforts its progress in this regard. A

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Blair King, City Manager

certification in sustainability would represent past, current, and future efforts toward sustainability into one easy to promote designation. In addition, it will serve as a trade mark that can be used to identify our commitment as a more sustainable city.

By being a certified sustainable city there may be the potential that we will be in a more competitive position to compete for the \$65 Million Measure K funds that will be available. In addition we may be in a more favorable posture to compete for the \$240 million Proposition 1C monies identified for infill area infrastructure improvements and brownfield cleanup.

By becoming a certified sustainable city, we would also be promoting the same values as the local wine industry is doing through "Lodi Rules". This is consistent with the intention of the Visitor's Bureau to be a wine tourism destination. Furthermore, this effort works in tandem with the Chamber of Commerce's efforts to position Lodi as a place for sustainable practices, including the manufacturing of solar cells and green businesses. The City has an opportunity to respond to a concern that the State initiated. The City can position itself as a leader rather than react to regulations that are coming in the near future.

**Conclusion:** The importance to incorporate sustainable practices into our organization has been identified at the State and local level. The need to gain certification as a Sustainable City can be seen from an organizational and marketing standpoint. Staff anticipates bringing to the City Council a request to enter into contract with a third party certifying organization that can help us reach this goal.

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Attachments: Matrix of Sustainable practices that existing within City Department

# City of Lodi Departmental Sustainability Matrix

